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Professor Patten regards labor as normally one of the rapidly increasing factors, and believes that wages must therefore fall to a minimum. He holds that there is no way of permanently raising wages but by raising the standard of living, and that the burden of taxation cannot fall on labor. Land he regards as normally the most slowly increasing factor.

These conclusions are questionable. Wages are evidently not at a minimum so long as labor is increasing faster than some other factor of production, and until they are at a minimum labor can be made to bear the burden of taxes. Taxes also check the accumulation of capital and so in another way operate to the disadvantage of labor. In whatever way we look at it it is difficult to see how the standard of living is to be raised save as wages are raised first. Professor Patten speaks in one place of actual rent as remaining for centuries above normal rent. May not actual wages remain for generations above mere subsistence wages and thereby afford means for continuously raising the standard of living? Certainly they may if capital is a more rapidly increasing factor of production than labor. And normal wages must be steadily rising wages, regardless of the standard of living, if labor, instead of land, is, after all, the most slowly increasing factor of production. And is it not? Has Professor Patten seen all the implications of his account of land? Does not the multiplication of the uses of land, which he so admirably describes, raise the intensive margin of cultivation faster than the diminishing returns of each particular crop lower both the intensive and the extensive margins together? Is it not a legitimate conclusion from his premises that land has become, and must henceforth continue to be, the most rapidly increasing factor of production, and that, therefore, falling prices of commodities, which he regards as an evil, cannot lower real wages but must increase them?

F. H. GIDDINGS.

Le Logement de l'Ouvrier et du Pauvre. États-Unis, Grande-Bretagne, France, Allemagne, Belgique. Par ARTHUR RAFFALOVICH. Paris, Guillaumin et Cie, 1887. — 8vo, 486 pp.

The social troubles of the old world are not only appearing in our country, they are growing apace. In 1838 the first tenement house in the United States was built in Gotham court, New York; to-day over one million of the inhabitants of New York are living in tenement houses. We are face to face with the problems which have been agitating Europe for half a century. How and where to lodge the poor has become well-nigh the most important municipal question in many modern cities.

M. Raffalovich, who is favorably known as the author of several recent

works, and as an arch-enemy of everything that savors of socialism, has produced a very readable and comprehensive book on the methods in vogue in the principal countries of the world. He gives a good survey of the legislation in America, England, France, Germany and Belgium, and recounts in detail the chief experiments that have been made in the way of private initiative and governmental co-operation. To those not acquainted with the facts the book may be recommended as a trustworthy guide and as a judiciously written *résumé* of actual conditions. Viewed as a statement of what is, I have no criticism to urge against M. Raffalovich's book; regarded as an exposition of what ought to be, there are perhaps several points on which issue might be joined.

One of the truest remarks of the author is that the root of the trouble is the poverty of individuals. In the American tenement houses, as is well known, one of the most serious evils is the overcrowding of rooms due to the taking in of "boarders" and "lodgers" of both sexes. Several years ago it fell to my lot, as director of the Sanitary Aid society, to supervise the inspection of every house in a given ward of New York city; and I was forced to the conclusion that the main cause of the squalor, unhealthiness and misery was the simple inability of the parents to eke out a sufficient amount to pay even moderate rents. Viewed in this light the tenement-house question becomes simply a part of the larger social problem. At the same time we must not lose sight of the fact that in many cases the rents are exorbitant and the accommodations scandalously inadequate in every respect. This result is due principally to the inordinate greed of the house owners, who earn, in New York at all events, from ten to fifteen and in some cases even twenty-five per cent net profits on the investment. Here, immediately, we see the opportunity for model dwellings companies which shall satisfy themselves with a moderate return on the capital. For while municipal boards of health may accomplish something, it is exceedingly difficult to cope with the natural instincts of rapacious landlords. The author refers to one or two of the New York companies, but makes no mention of a recent and, as it seems, most promising experiment. The "Tenement House Building Company" has completed a number of buildings in one of the worst districts of the city, limiting the rate of dividends to four per cent and applying the surplus to a plan of rent-insurance, whereby the inmates may ultimately be made rent free. Thus far its history is most encouraging; and as soon as it is reasonably certain that the projected revenue may be counted upon, it is proposed to appeal to the public for large sums and to reconstruct entire sections of the city. The buildings themselves, it may be said, are truly model tenements, and superior to anything of the kind in England or elsewhere. Private initiative may in this way accomplish much.

It even becomes a question whether it may not be advisable for the municipalities themselves to aid indirectly in the construction of such model tenements. M. Raffalovich objects strenuously to the direct intervention of the government, and he is perhaps correct in this respect. But the policy of city loans to well-established companies and under carefully defined safeguards may at all events be discussed. M. Raffalovich is very much opposed even to this mediate intervention, and maintains that the French experiments have been disastrous and costly. But he does not seem to give sufficient weight to the English history of tenement-house reform, which proves that municipal aid to large companies is, under certain conditions, both practicable and salutary. We may not yet be ripe for this method in America, and the danger of democratic agitators converting the demand for municipal aid into a plea for free rents is always present. But the situation is becoming so horrible in some of our larger cities that, if the private companies are not soon able to attract sufficient capital for extensive alterations and undertakings, the question of municipal loans for tenement-house reform, as in England, will soon be upon us. Let us try private initiative as long as possible. But if that continues to be a failure, what then?

EDWIN R. A. SELIGMAN.

First Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Sweating System. London, 1888. — Folio, 1032 pp.

This report carries us back to the days of Charles Kingsley and *Alton Locke*. The "sweating system" is in full revival in London, and it is again the era of "cheap clothes and nasty." The "sweater" is a man who takes a bundle of clothes, already cut, from the manufacturer and carries them home to be made up. In his small room, sometimes a living room, sometimes a shop built out over the yard, he employs a number of men to assist him. There, crowded together in an atmosphere made foul by gas, by the coke fire for heating the pressing irons and by human breath and exhalations, with total disregard of all sanitary rules, these men sit and work 14, 16, and 18 hours a day. The "sweater" receives one-half of the sum paid for the work, distributing the remaining one-half among his employees. There is constant competition among the "sweaters" to obtain the clothing, and so the price is driven lower and lower and the wages of the men become less and less. The men themselves are helpless. It is either work or starve. The labor itself is practically unskilled. A "greener" can learn it in a month's time; and it is no longer necessary to shut the men up, as in